



## Feb 28, 2024 Meeting Repotting with Gordon & Mike

Our February meeting will be hosted by the esteemed Gordon Deeg & Mike Rosenthal with other club members as needed. This will be a demo and information dump. New members should take notes at this meeting as we talk about soil, the repotting process, pots, and so much more. Gordon is our club advisor and has so much knowledge and experience to share.



**GSBF Replay: Mike Lane “Clip & Grow Form and Technique”** [bit.ly/3UhZSyG](https://bit.ly/3UhZSyG)

**Revisit the 2022 Pacific Bonsai Expo**  
[bit.ly/3MtS1t2](https://bit.ly/3MtS1t2)



“It is commonplace in Japan for that core, interior mass of akadama, pumice, and roots to remain untouched for decades, because they retain porosity and healthy growing roots inside it for that long.

“I was pretty sure there was a connection between the Japanese choice of growing media, the method of repotting, and the resulting lack of tree stress.”

—Michael Hagedorn, [Bonsai Heresy](#)

## Local Events Notice

### Annual Mammoth Auction & Sale Fundraiser:

Feb 17-18, Sat noon - 4 PM, Sun 9 AM - 3 PM.

Lakeside Park Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Ave, Oakland, CA. Fundraiser for the GSBF Bonsai Garden.

[bonsailakemerritt.com](https://bonsailakemerritt.com) for more details

### American Bonsai Assoc. Sacramento’s Annual Show:

Apr 13-14, Sat 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM Sacramento, 3330 McKinley Blvd, Sacramento,

Headliner: Tyler Sherrod, Professional Bonsai Artist/Teacher from Georgia, will conduct a live demonstration each day at 1:30PM

### Kusamura Bonsai Club 62nd Annual Show:

Apr 20-21, Sat noon-4 pm, Sun 11 am-4 pm.

Addison School, 1045 Webster St., Palo Alto, CA.

Headliner: Mike Pistello. Over 60 Bonsai Trees, Bonsai & pre-Bonsai sale, Docent tour Sat 1:30 pm, Show critique Sat 4 pm. Show chair: Idris: [idrisan@gmail.com](mailto:idrisan@gmail.com).

[kusamurabonsai.org](https://kusamurabonsai.org) for more details

### 2024 Pacific Bonsai Expo:

Oct 26-27, Henry J. Kaiser Center for the Arts, Oakland.

Call for entries: Submission Feb 1 - Apr 30

[pacificbonsaiexpo.org](https://pacificbonsaiexpo.org) for more details

## 2024 Dues are Now Due

Dues: \$45 (single member); \$55 (family member).

If you’ve been a member for 10 years and are 72 or older, individual membership is \$25 and family is \$35.

### Also In This Issue:

**President’s Message**

**January Meeting Recap: “JT” — Oaks**

**Calendar & Refreshment Reminder**

**Josh Diaz—SBBK Board Member highlight**

**“Get Ready For Show Time”**

# President's Message

By Jerry Carpenter



February is known for its bluster, its unpredictable weather, and its rapid temperature changes. This February has been no different. We began with the cyclone and far too much water. Be sure to tip your pots to give better drainage and then rotate them so that roots do not rot. I have flipped all my Suibons to keep none of the copious water. I am constantly moving my trees around right now to make sure what little sun they get can be optimized.

Keep an eye on your trees and enjoy this season of repotting. I repotted a few shohin in late January and more this month already. You do not want to repot trees that are dripping with water, especially trees that have not been repotted in some time.

When the soil is too wet you can break clumps of roots off. Of course, you do not want too dry either!

Plan for repotting by bringing your candidates out of the rain to protect them from the weather and protect them from low temperature swings.

We are also busy starting up the processes needed for the our June show! More will come soon.

We have confirmed Eric Schrader for our Wednesday, March 27 SBBK birthday meeting. He will be presenting on shohin and mame styles and I hope to convince him to bring a few of his unconventional displays.

The stamp beside my name is a hanko/inkan. It means "bonsai carpenter."

## SBBK Calendar

- Feb 28 Meeting: Repotting:—Gordon Deeg**
- Mar 2 Repotting Party at Gordon's garden:** bring a tree and potting material (pot, soil, wire, etc) and also to help repot some of Gordon's trees. 10:30 start (Details to follow by email)
- Mar 5 First Tuesday Workshop:** Val & Gordon San Mateo Garden Center 7-9 pm
- Mar 27 Meeting: Shohin & Mame—Eric W Schrader**  
Also SBBK Birthday
- Jun 1 - 2 SBBK Annual Club Show** (details to follow)  
San Mateo Garden Center (set up May 31)

## Show & Tell

We encourage SBBK members to bring in trees, bonsai pots, stands or projects to share during our monthly meetings. These are teaching moments and inspiring for all.

# January Meeting Recap

## Seasonal Oak Maintenance

John "JT" Thompson is one of our resident bonsai experts and shared his love for oaks and offered tips on seasonal oak maintenance. JT was first introduced to bonsai when stationed in Okinawa back in the 70's. His passion and experience led his to hold leadership positions at Midori, GSBF, ABS and SBBK.

We are fortunate to have oaks locally and to see great examples along the California landscape. If you do not have an oak in your collection yet, we hope this will inspire you to do so. This is a good season to collect, with permission, as well as a reminder to collect and plant oak acorns in the fall.



Collected Valley Oak



Collected Coast Live Oak  
continued on page 3



**Welcome new member  
Ramona**

## Refreshment Rotation

<b>Feb Mtg</b>	<b>Mar Mtg</b>	<b>Apr Mth</b>
Dustin Ho	SBBK Board	Jeremy Foster & Brie T.
Steve Iwaki	Birthday celeb'n	Howard & Pam Gallegos

Please find a replacement if you are unable to bring refreshments as scheduled.

# Josh Diaz: Growing Up with Bonsai

by Joshua Diaz & Michael Wei

As we work in our gardens we can appreciate that each tree has a story, an origin, development over time, and contributing to the beauty of your garden. Likewise, each member of SBBK has a lovely story about their introduction to bonsai, and how they have developed over time. This month I wanted to share Josh Diaz's story with bonsai.

Josh has been around bonsai for as long as he could truly remember. His father got into bonsai as a hobby, and together they would go to the Palo Alto shows all the time. They spent a lot of time at Ken & Tak Sugimoto nursery, on Page Mill, and Josh reflected what a fantastic experience that was. At that time, Josh just enjoyed being there because Mr. Sugimoto used to always give him popsicles on their visits!

Josh has been a member since late 2017 and started his second year as a SBBK board member. "At first I was nervous, but I am glad I was able to join."



"When I first started I had no idea what trees I liked. After a few years I've been really fond of deciduous trees lately with no particular species but I think that's what I have more at the moment. I think more importantly a solid trunk, no matter what species, will lead to a great tree. Some honorable mentions would be Japanese beech, ume and tosho. Toshō (Juniperus Rigida) when taken to a highly refined level are some amazing trees and the just the way they can ramify is second to none!"

Josh can empathize with bonsai-beginners, because "in the beginning you just want to buy everything and anything. It's a normal stage in our bonsai journey, but at one point in time we end up with too much material that will never be anything in our lifetime or material we neglect." We need material to experiment on and to learn different techniques and horticulture. Joshua recommends beginners can safely start with Junipers, Pines, and Tridents—they are sturdy species that can help you learn.

If you have the opportunity to take any workshops with Peter Tea, he is a fantastic teacher/mentor. There is a group from Sei boku that also meets with Adam Toth once a month and it's a great all day workshop to really take your skill to the next level.

"If you have any questions please don't hesitate ask anyone from the club there are a lot of wonderful people in this club that it's really like a warm and family atmosphere!" Josh.

---

## Seasonal Oak Maintenance (continued)

### Winter Solstice Dec. 21

#### Oak Form

- Decurrent - Deciduous and Evergreen
- Silhouette broader than tall
- Multiple diffuse leaders - Not single trunkline to top
- Leader branches slanting upward meandering to soft rounded crowns.
- Sub-branches and twigs diffuse outward to surface of the umbrella-like canopy

#### Starting Now

- Tree has stored energy in trunk, roots and branches for use in Spring
- Ideal time to prep tree for Spring push
- Expect new growth late Feb / early March
- Unique Characteristics - Flaws to Features
- Course to fine - Taper and movement
- Create Depth - 3-D effect
- Wire branches into shape
- Collecting - Ideal time after first soaking rain - give 2-3 days or muddy
- Plant acorns now - protect from rodents and birds



#### Roots:

- Acorn
- Radical - initial soil penetration
- Tap root - finds water source and stabilizes tree
- Lateral roots - from tap root take over water transport
- Surface roots - form at trunk soil line - Nebari

#### Cutting and Pruning

- Hard trunk/branch cuts to create taper or new direction
- Straight across clean cut for fast healing - cut paste
- Cut back on older bare branches to create bud back for styling
- Easier to work with young shoots than old sparse branches
- Pruning to 2 buds for ramification - Leave a stub

#### Repot

- Reason: New pot, New front, or Root bound
- Slow or accelerate growth
- More akadama slow growth - More pumice to speed growth

continued on page 5

# Getting Ready for Show Time!

By Marsha Mekisich

Mark your calendars, as our annual 2024 SBBK show will be here before you know it. This year our club will be 39 years old. Our show is one of the ways we celebrate by sharing and demonstrating what our club is all about. By now hopefully you have identified tree(s) and/or accents you want to show off in their best, **Saturday and Sunday, June 1st and 2nd with show set up Friday May 31st.** To refresh or learn key points regarding show tree prep, please refer to article in our May '22 Snippet (visit: [bit.ly/3HJI49r](https://bit.ly/3HJI49r)).

Bill McDonald, our marketing lead, will be sharing regarding marketing. We have flyers and pdfs you can use to help get news out to family, friends etc.

Saturday Gordon Deeg will lead our Demolition Trio consisting of Joshua Diaz, Steve Iwaki, and Bill McDonald as they separate mature trio of Eastern Red Cedars growing on a rock and repot as 3 separate bonsai.

Sunday, we have our local talented artist, **Adam Toth.** He will start the day providing a critique of our show, starting at 8:30 a.m. sharp. Critiques are always very insightful and great learning experiences and perspectives. Starting at 10-10:30, he will lead 5 club members as they work on their own trees. In addition, he will guide Valerie Monroe as she styles the club raffle tree. Workshop will continue till raffle time of 3:00. Signups will be available on first come first serve basis. Cost will be \$50.00 each. I hope to see some of you who have not had opportunity to take a workshop outside of our own first Tuesdays, to sign up. You won't regret it. If you can't, then be sure to follow Adam around as he leads the workshop.



[adam.jp.bon](https://www.instagram.com/adam.jp.bon)

Below a heads up and layout on some of the show's needs and expectations. Lots of opportunities to participate and contribute to our show's success.

**SHOW TREE(s)** – Refer show tree prep article in our May '22 Snippet. When you select your show tree, please email me Species, Botanical if know and number of years in training. [Springhill.2@outlook.com](mailto:Springhill.2@outlook.com). Deadline will be Friday, May 24<sup>th</sup>, but sooner is better.

**STANDS** - Need a stand for your tree? Reach out to me, Gordon, or a board member with a photo, size of your tree and its pot. Do not wait until setup if you need a stand. Put your name on any trees, stands, and accent plants you bring to the exhibit to ensure who to return to if accidentally left at end of show.

**SALE ITEMS** – The show sale is a great opportunity to open bench space or create room for your new purchase. Members can sell healthy groomed trees, plants, pots, or other bonsai items. The proceeds will be split between you the seller and SBBK at a whopping 80%/20% split. Sales sheets and tags will be distributed at upcoming meetings. **You must have both sale sheet correctly completed and individual tags affixed prior to bringing into sales area Saturday morning no later than 9:30 a.m.** Do NOT bring it prior to Saturday.

**RAFFLE PRIZE DONATIONS** – All members will bring and donate two bonsai related raffle items to be raffled off on Saturday and Sunday valued at \$25 or more. This can be pots, trees, books, tools, scrolls, stands or garden center gift cards etc. Please bring Raffle Prize Donations Saturday/Sunday by 9:30 latest. Fine to bring all donations Saturday. Just let Raffle folks know.

**SET-UP/TAKE-DOWN** sign-up sheets will also be available starting March meeting. We need all hands to help and will have leads and seasoned folks to help coordinate.

- Tables & Chair setup – both in and outside as instructed.
- Backdrop setup- Our backdrops for Tokonomas are in Rose Room and need to be brought carefully down and then installed.
- Table lifts – Install pvc lifts to perimeter showroom tables.
- Tablecloth draping. Box fold table clothes to all perimeter tables, and once back drops installed for Tokonomas apply black slip covers to those tables.
- Show Tree Placement- Receive and review trees, their stands and accents for show display set up. Set-up guided by Val, JT or Jerry. Not sure who yet.
- Tree name cards – place cards consistently and id who doesn't have card yet. Hopefully still time to make a few, but everyone should have provided already. Don't stress us out....please.
- Accents – Those trees needing accents should verify with Show Tree Placement monitor and handle as suggested.
- Scrolls – Folks with Tokonoma displays may choose to incorporate scrolls.

Each and every Sei Boku Club member makes this show special every year. Please reach out to me as you have any questions, ideas or issues along the way. Thank you in advance for helping to make our show special and a great success every year.

## Helpful “Bonsai Tonight” links:

Preparing Trees for Show:

[bit.ly/486uNBj](https://bit.ly/486uNBj)

Why Visit Bonsai Shows?

[bit.ly/3SMeaqj](https://bit.ly/3SMeaqj)

# 2024 SBBK Calendar of Events

Please note updates in each Snippet edition as details, presenters or topics may change.

- Feb 28 Repotting – Gordon and team
- Mar 2 Repotting Party at Gordon's garden
- Mar 27 Eric W Schrader – Shohin & Mame (SBBK Birthday)
- Apr 24 Show Readiness – Marsha M.
- May 22 Raw Material or What do I do with this? – Multi Table Workshop
- Jun 1 & 2 SBBK Show – Special Guest to be confirmed
- Jun 26 Bonsai Challenge – multi-club
- Jul 24 Multi-Species Tables – various table hosts
- Aug 28 Deadwood Presentation – Special guest Andres Bicocca
- Sep 21 SBBK BBQ
- Sep 25 Green Elephant (auction fund-raiser)
- Oct 23 Special guests Yannick Kiggen & Bjorn Bjorholm Style-off
- Nov 25 What Makes a Good Pot? – Val and Josh
- Dec 8 Holiday Event

## Seasonal Oak Maintenance

(Continued from page 3)

- Smaller size soil to slow growth - larger to speed growth
- Examine roots of sickly tree
- Partial repot to replace compacted surface soil
- Late repot = later Spring push

### Fertilize and pest control

- Fertilize if growing trunk size - not if ramifying and refining
- Spray for fungal control - copper, lime sulfur, Cleary's 3336



### Editors Special Note:

Consider sharing your projects or best seasonal trees with the club by submitting some photos and captions for the Snippet. Please send your entries to [mwei2cre8@msn.com](mailto:mwei2cre8@msn.com).

Visit us on the web at <http://seibokubonsai.org/>



or at <https://facebook.com/seibokubonsai>  
or at <https://instagram.com/seibokubonsai>



# Sei Boku Bonsai Kai

## President:

Jerry Carpenter, [jcsf1090@comcast.net](mailto:jcsf1090@comcast.net)

## Vice President:

Mike Rosenthal, [mhr@stanford.edu](mailto:mhr@stanford.edu)

## Treasurer:

Randi Keppeler, [calshohin@yahoo.com](mailto:calshohin@yahoo.com)

## Assistant Treasurer:

(Vacant)

## Recording Secretary:

(Vacant)

## Corresponding Secretary:

(Vacant)

## Past President:

Steve Iwaki, [siwaki@comcast.net](mailto:siwaki@comcast.net)

## Newsletter Editor:

Michael Wei, [mwei2cre8@msn.com](mailto:mwei2cre8@msn.com)

## Board of Directors:

Roy Murakami, [rmura221@yahoo.com](mailto:rmura221@yahoo.com)

Gary Smith, [gls94019@gmail.com](mailto:gls94019@gmail.com)

Joshua Diaz, [elieljoshuad@gmail.com](mailto:elieljoshuad@gmail.com)

Cath Tierney, [ctierney@stanford.edu](mailto:ctierney@stanford.edu)

Bill McDonald, [bill@walter-mcdonald.com](mailto:bill@walter-mcdonald.com)

Valerie Monroe, [mcsnail@aol.com](mailto:mcsnail@aol.com)



Sei Boku Bonsai Kai Inc.  
Proud member of  
Golden State  
Bonsai Federation

